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done this as impartially as we could, we would now say, earnestly, that we have seldom perused a book with so deep interest or so much profit, and that we advise all our readers to possess it, and to make themselves familiar with its lofty principles, and with the benign spirit that breathes everywhere from its pages.

ART. VI. — 1. ARISTOTLE'S *Politics*.

2. PLATO'S *Republic*.

3. *Opere di GIOVANNI BATTISTA VICO, ordinate ed illustrate da GIUSEPPE FERRARI*. Seconda Edizione. Milano. 1854. 6 vols. Vols. V., VI. *Scienza Nuova*.

4. *Il Principe, etc. di NICCOLÒ MACHIAVELLI*. Seconda Edizione. Firenze. 1857.

5. HERDER'S *Sämmtliche Werke*. Stuttgart und Tübingen. 1853. 40 vols. Cotta'scher Verlag. Vols. XXVII.—XXX. *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*.

6. FRIED. V. SCHLEGEL'S *Sämmtliche Werke*. Zweite Ausgabe. Wien. 1846. 15 vols. Vols. XIII., XIV. *Philosophie der Geschichte*.

7. HEGEL'S *Werke*. Vollständige Ausgabe durch einen Verein von Freunden des Verewigten. Berlin. 1837. 18 vols. Vol. IX. *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte*.

8. *Einleitung in die Geschichte des Neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*. Von G. G. GERVINUS. Leipzig: Verlag von Wilhelm Engelmann. 1853.

It has been demonstrated, indirectly by Plato, directly by Vico, Herder, and others, that human affairs must be governed by unalterable laws. To discover that man's history is regulated by general principles, is to advance a step, but not to arrive at the goal. Beyond the demonstration that the development of humanity in time and space is according to fixed laws, there remains the need of discovering the laws themselves. It is not enough to know that laws *must be*; we still have to ascertain what they *are*.

Now, without stopping to examine the various systems of the philosophy of history which have been advanced in modern times, it is sufficient for our present purpose to characterize them as too subjective.* The laws of history are, for the most part, sought in the understanding, emotions, and passions of the individual. A complete analysis of the nature of Adam,

* Vico is entitled to great credit, as the first to announce to the world that history is a science which has its laws. The *Scienza Nuova* is a veritable monument of human genius. It matters not that the poor solitary Neapolitan wandered in the mazes of Roman jurisprudence, that he lost himself in the labyrinth of ancient mythology and philology; to him remains the glory of having seen, through the mists of Roman absolutism and Italian theology, the idea of an organic universal history, whose *leyge eterne* he strove, not without some degree of success, to announce and demonstrate.

Herder was a poet and a preacher. He contradicts himself in calling his work "Ideas towards a *Philosophy of History*"; for he not only rejects philosophy, but proclaims his hatred of it. He goes on poetizing and preaching from the creation of the world down to the hour in which he writes, uttering sublime thoughts, and is almost always spiritual and eloquent; but he is continually erecting himself as an exclamation-point at the end of great periods of history, instead of giving us, in any sense of the words, a philosophic explanation. His book is one of the most interesting produced in modern times, but the *Ideen* do not take us, *philosophically*, one step beyond the *Scienza Nuova*.

Frederick Schlegel, who made his *début* in the literary world with an Anthology from Lessing's works, and ended his career by admiring Alva and Philip II., and proclaiming Calderon a greater poet than Shakespeare, has written a so-called *Philosophy of History*, the principles of which are the prominent dogmas of the Romish theology. Bossuet's *Discours* is far more eloquent, much loftier in tone of thought, and, as an historical exposition of the Augustinian doctrine of the Divine sovereignty, has a deeper philosophic interest; while it exhibits a power of historical generalization incomparably superior.

Hegel, the ablest thinker of Germany, and the most consistent of men, has applied the principles of his philosophy to an interpretation of universal history. We have not space to make an exposition of his system. The *logos* of Nature, of the Soul, of Right, of Art, etc., is, with him, also the *logos* of History. "Der einzige Gedanke," he says, "der die Philosophie mitbringt, ist aber der einfache Gedanke, dass die Vernunft die Welt beherrsche, dass es also auch in der Weltgeschichte vernünftig gegangen sey."

Fichte, who doubted his own philosophy so little that he was willing to stake the salvation of his soul upon its truth, although it left him in doubt of his own existence, did not hesitate to apply his principles to history. With thoroughgoing subjectivity, he declared that we find nothing in history except what we bring to it. "Wir werden in der ganzen Weltgeschichte nie Etwas finden, was wir nicht selbst erst hineinlegten."

Thus each philosopher, all the way down to Mr. Lewes, applies his principles to the interpretation of history. What we now especially need is a *deduction* of laws from facts. An *induction* of systems, to which facts are made to bend, has ceased to be of utility.

it is sometimes supposed, would give us all the principles of the world's history. Such a view is partial, therefore false. Without individual thoughts, emotions, passions, there would be no history; yet these are not history. Without oak and iron there would be no ships; yet oak and iron are not ships. What should we say of a naval architect who sought the best method of ship-building by investigating the elementary nature of iron, and subjecting acorns to chemical analysis? Such, however, has been the process of many who have elaborated philosophies of history. Our race is an organic whole. The principles of its history must be sought, not merely in the nature of the individual, but also in the action of society. The organic growth, or development, of the race is slow, yet regular. Every faculty of man points to a social, as well as individual existence. Each man is a unit, and, at the same time, a part of a greater unit, of a whole. The essential laws of history, then, must be the laws of human relations. The world is a stage upon which is exhibited, not only individual, but also national life. Man worships, for example, and, as a worshipping being, is an object of interest, for the element of reverence is common to us all; but the religious history of the race would be summed up in those two words, unless each one as a worshipper existed in relations of help or hinderance with his fellow-men. We also exist in organic connection with the race by relations of time and space, as well as by community of activities. In order, therefore, to find a fertile principle of history, we must search in facts for their governing and vivifying laws.

Without pursuing this inquiry in the abstract, we here propose to take an ascertained law, and trace it rapidly through the history of every civilized nation. It will reveal a principle of the deepest interest, and from it may be deduced political lessons of the greatest importance.

The law which we propose to exemplify is this. At the beginning of a nation, in the nature of things, liberty is enjoyed by one man alone; as the nation progresses, liberty is usurped by the few; when the nation ripens, liberty becomes the possession of the many; when it decays, liberty passes from the many to the few, finally from the few to one again. This

law holds good, not only with individual nations, but with groups of nations, like the Grecian states in antiquity, and the kingdoms of modern Europe. It is also true, as far as we may judge, of the race.* This law has not been discovered by those who have devoted themselves to the philosophy of history, but by the two sharpest observers of men that the world has ever seen. Aristotle states it generally, not formally; that is, without definition and limitation. Machiavelli saw it, although not in its completeness, and made it the principle of his political action; — it affords the only key to his misunderstood character. We have no means of judging whether Machiavelli found the law in Aristotle. It has been re-stated by Professor G. G. Gervinus of Heidelberg, and by him applied to the interpretation of strictly modern history.†

The earliest rulers of Greece were patriarchal monarchs. The divinity that hedged them was the firm popular belief in their descent from the gods. They were at the same time priests, judges, and military chiefs. The liberty and power of the kings were limited only by the natural conditions of all rule. No constitutions, either written or traditional, recognized or guarded the rights of the people. But there, as everywhere, monarchs were unable to govern without the executive aid of others. Hence they appeared in the field and court surrounded by chiefs. In those chiefs we recognize the germ of a new force. Already in Homer we see the king limited in his power by turbulent nobles. Cavalry was of paramount

* Hegel says that the East has never known any other political law than that of freedom for one; that in Greece and at Rome freedom was regarded as the privilege of the few; while the modern, essentially Teutonic idea is that all are free. "Der Orient wuste und weiss nur, dass *einer frei ist*, die Griechische und römische Welt, dass *einige frei seyen*, die germanische Welt weiss, dass *alle frei sind*."

† Hegel understood the law but imperfectly, as Gervinus himself said in his defence at Mannheim, when arraigned by the government of Baden for the treason contained in his "Introduction to the History of the Nineteenth Century." The following is Hegel's very faulty statement of it: "Die erste Form, die wir daher in der Weltgeschichte sehen, ist der *Despotismus*, die zweite ist die *Demokratie* und *Aristokratie*, die dritte ist die *Monarchie*."

Gervinus himself applies the law only in a general way, and often wanders in tracing the connection of events. He lacks what M. Guizot is pre-eminently a master of, — historical concatenation.

importance in the earliest warfare of Greece ; none but nobles could afford a horse ; hence the influence of the knights gradually increased, and authority glided slowly away from the monarch. At length, in all the Grecian states, kings were superseded, really or virtually, by aristocracies ; — liberty passed from the one to the few.

Aristocracy, like every other evil, contains within itself the seeds of its own death. Rivalry of families, the enervating influence of luxury, the equipoise of fixed social position, easy honor inherited without invigorating toil, the graceful monotony of an aimless life, — these, and a thousand other things, corrupt, weaken, and finally destroy it. In Greece, as elsewhere, aristocracies were unanimous only in disregarding the rights of those below themselves. Under their insolent rule the people began to regret the patriarchal kings, and were ready to assist any one who proposed to bring back the good old times. The first indication that liberty must pass from the few to the many, was a popular longing for the restoration of monarchy. The commons desired a ruler to secure for themselves the rights which they began to understand. But aristocracies never give up their power without a long struggle.

It is easy for a few nobles to unite their strength in order to usurp the monarch's power, but the people always find it difficult to act in concert. The commonalty in Greece first obtained some advantage, when it appeared that heavy-armed foot-soldiers were more than a match for cavalry. Thenceforward the nobility were of less importance. The services of the lower order were required in the navy, and each one began to feel his own consideration as an individual member of the state. The people, in order to obtain their newly discovered rights, needed a leader, and found him only outside of their own rank. The ambitious seized upon such an opportunity for their personal aggrandizement. Hence tyrannies, which were only temporary, and marked the prolonged transition from aristocracy to democracy. The nobles sometimes concurred in the election of a despot, to further their own interest, or to crush the people ; they sometimes, to reconcile their own dissensions, chose a dictator, who retained the reins of

government for a season; sometimes a crafty demagogue seized the citadel, or obtained by stratagem a body-guard, and thus reached the supreme power by a *coup d'état*; and sometimes the ancient king, with hereditary right, made himself the people's champion, and broke the power of the aristocracy.

The Grecian people had no previous example of a democracy before their eyes. Hence they needed the tyrants as educators, no less than as leaders against aristocracies. Without them the people could not have grown to a full consciousness of their rights, the primary condition of democracy, nor could they have overthrown the oppressive oligarchies. As a public benefactor and political teacher, Peisistratus may be taken as a favorable example. While the aristocratic parties of the coast, the plains, and the highlands, were contending with one another, he espoused the popular cause to gain his own ends, and, after a few serious mishaps, made himself master of the Athenian state. Although he supported his power by mercenary troops, he endeavored to please and benefit the people. He wisely administered existing laws; he sent the needy and the idle into the country to cultivate the soil; he embellished Athens with public buildings, fountains, and gardens; he encouraged literature in various ways; he was the first in Greece to collect a library, which he made free to all; and to him the world is indebted for the whole written text of Homer. Peisistratus did more for the Grecian people than all the aristocracies combined had ever done. He felt that to the people he owed, indirectly at least, his power, and he was under obligation in some way to reward them.

Tyranny in Greece, marking the transition from aristocracy to democracy, lasted about two hundred years (B. C. 700 – 500). Then followed a period of liberty, during which there was a wonderful development of the human mind. And in those states where man was freest, his energy and genius produced the choicest fruits.

It is not necessary here to dwell upon the downward transition from democracy to oligarchy, from oligarchy to the imperial usurpation of all rights. Not long after the destruction of Grecian liberty by the monarchs of Macedon, Rome planted

her foot of iron upon the native land of freedom and the home of art; and another great people was verifying, with some modifications of time, place, and circumstance, the same law of history.

Although the early kings of Rome were elected in the *Comitia Curiata* of the people, their power was supreme. Like the first kings of Greece, they were priests and judges, as well as military leaders. As they alone possessed the right to take the auspices, and as, without the approbation of the gods expressed by the auspices, no public business could be transacted, they stood as absolute mediators between heaven and the people. With the *inauguratio* and the *imperium* was conferred upon them supreme priestly, judicial, and military authority. From them there was no appeal.* They were not dependent upon the people for support, and they had, it is probable, the appointment of all magistrates. They had the distribution of all booty taken in war. By their call alone could the Senate and the *Comitia* of the *Curiae* assemble, and only matters proposed by them could be discussed.

In Rome, the patricians, the aristocracy, were spared a long contest with the kingly power, by the suicidal insolence of the last king, and the timely energy of Brutus. All the prerogatives of the crown passed into the hands of the nobles, after the banishment of Lucius Tarquinius Superbus. Although he obtained the kingdom by murder, yet the patricians had assisted him, because he was ready to abolish all the rights conferred upon the people by his predecessor. The aristocracy commenced their reign, then, with supreme power in their own hands. All offices, civil and religious, were confined to them. The poor plebeians, although of the same stock with the patricians, had to fight and bleed for Rome, without any rights in common with their lords. When Tarquinius Priscus had thought partially to enfranchise the *plebs*, by dividing them into three tribes, he was frustrated in his benevolent plans by the augur, Attus Navius, a tool of the aristocracy. Servius Tullius gave a regular organization to the commonalty, by

* Niebuhr, however, thinks otherwise. See Rubino, *Untersuchungen über Römische Verfassung*, passim.

dividing them into tribes, with tribunes at their heads. He divided the whole population into five classes, according to wealth, for taxation and military service, so that the heavier burdens might fall upon the richer. A sort of national assembly, called *comitiatus maximus*, was formed of the whole body of the people; yet the votes were so distributed that the wealthier classes, to which the patricians belonged, decided each question before it reached the poorer. But, as we have said, even this commencement of liberty was overthrown by Rome's last king, and the aristocracy began their rule without any popular checks to their power. It is true that the plebeians, on the establishment of the so-called Republic, regained in form the shadowy liberty of which they had been deprived by Tarquinius Superbus, yet they were in reality mere *clients*, and wholly without a voice in the state.

Then began in Rome the long and glorious struggle between the people and an oppressive oligarchy. The plebeians contended for equal rights and equal liberty; the patricians, for exclusive mastery and exclusive privileges. The plebeians obtained in succession a law to prevent patricians from taking usurious interest; the appointment of tribunes for their protection; the appointment of plebeian *ædiles*; the right to summon before their own *Comitia Tributa* those who violated the privileges of their order; the power to make decrees, which became binding upon the whole nation, B.C. 449; the establishment of the *connubium* with patricians; admission to the *quæstorship*, which opened the way to the Senate; after a long and severe struggle, a rogation for the substitution of *decemvirs* for *duumvirs*, — half patricians, half plebeians, — to keep the *Sibylline books*; restoration of the consulship, on the condition that one consul should always be of their own order; the right to occupy part of the *ager publicus*; the censorship, *prætorship*, and finally the offices of *pontifex* and *augur*. The long struggle of the commons of Rome for liberty and for equal political rights was always conducted with temperance and heroic dignity. The opposition of the aristocracy was bitter and unscrupulous. When the plebeians gained a point, the patricians used every means, fair or foul, to render it nugatory. The last secession of the people was simply to obtain the execution

of laws already enacted. A full reconciliation of the two orders was effected by the dictator Hortensius, and a struggle, which forms for the enlightened publicist the most interesting chapter of the world's history, from that moment politically ceased.

"Rome," says a writer in Smith's Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities, "internally strengthened and united, entered upon the happiest period of her history. How completely the old distinction was now forgotten, is evident from the fact that henceforth both consuls were frequently plebeians. The government of Rome had thus gradually changed from an oppressive oligarchy into a moderate democracy, in which each party had its proper influence and the power of checking the other, if it should venture to assume more than it could legally claim. It was this constitution, the work of many generations, that excited the admiration of the great statesman Polybius."

We have traced our law of history from kings, through aristocracy, to democracy, at Rome, and the task has been altogether pleasing; but now the reversed process presents itself, and casts a shadow of doubt and sadness upon the soul. The law which we are exemplifying predicts that oligarchy will succeed democracy, and will itself be followed by despotism. The Nobiles at Rome were the descendants of those plebeians who had obtained access to curule magistracies. The "Known" (Nobiles) had no peculiar privileges that were not enjoyed by the Ignobiles (the "Unknown"); but they were bound together by name, by a common instinct of exclusiveness, and by mutual interest, and they soon contrived to keep in their own order (Nobilitas) the principal offices of the state. We need not trace the history of this struggle. Rome at length was governed by a new oligarchy. Finally we have Cæsar, an emperor, liberty lost, long decay, the political world lying in chaotic darkness, the shadow of death, and the dawn of a new era over the grave of man's freedom and hopes.

In the kingdoms of modern Europe we do not find a perfectly regular historic development. One nation has interfered with another. In fact, the states of modern times form a group, like the states of ancient Greece, and we must look for the manifestation of an historic law in the combined action of them all. The new era properly begins with the downfall

of the Western Empire. It is, therefore, not necessary to dwell upon the political condition of the barbarians in Central and Northern Europe, previously to the time of Charlemagne. With him modern history commences. Again, as in early Greece, as in early Rome, we see liberty confined to one man. But we shall soon see feudal aristocracies springing up all over Europe, and disputing his power with the monarch. In the Grecian states, with a single exception, oligarchies succeeded the kings in form as well as reality. On the other hand, in modern Europe, we shall see the kings, although reduced to dependence upon the feudal lords, with a single exception, everywhere retaining their thrones. We shall then see them, like the Grecian tyrants, lending themselves as leaders to the feudally oppressed people, to break the power of the aristocracies. Out of such a union of people and sovereign against the oppressive power of the nobles has sprung modern absolutism. Already the tyrant has prolonged his rule beyond the natural period of its necessity, and modern nations, conscious of their rights, are watching for a favorable opportunity to take the reins of government into their own hands.

The society of modern Europe is not old. It has scarcely arrived at the period of maturity. The natural cycle of historical development is not more than half fulfilled. The modern epoch of monarchy has passed away; aristocracy has flourished, and has been broken; absolutism has already united and taught the nations; democracy has prospectively shown itself, here and there, in Italy, in the Netherlands, in Switzerland, in England, in France, and is now placing its fulcrum in the United States, in order to overturn the world. An era of liberty is at hand,—it may begin to-morrow or a hundred years hence,—when the regenerated nations of Europe shall take America by the hand, and plant free institutions over the grave of despotism.

But we are anticipating. Let us rapidly trace our historical law, in its more or less complete manifestations, through the modern states. If we must indulge in hopeful prophecy, our predictions should be the necessary consequences of solid facts.

We naturally turn to Italy, after having followed the course

of political events in ancient Rome. Metternich has contemptuously said that the fair peninsula,

“ Che Appennin parte
E circonda la mane e l' Alpe,”

is only a geographical expression. It is doubtless the sole meaning that Italy has for her despoilers, who forget her varied history, her great schools of art, her rich literature, and the beautiful language which she has preserved through all vicissitudes of national fortune. In other countries of Europe the invasions of barbarians at length ceased; in Italy they still continue. The Transalpine nations still sing:—

“ Kennst du das Land wo die Citronen blühn,
Im dunkeln Laub die Gold-Orangen glühn ?
Dahin ! dahin ! ”

In Italy, then, we must look for a double historical development;—one development local; the other, general, and in connection with that of European nations. As every one knows, the first rulers were conquering barbarians. But we see aristocracy very early gaining a foothold, and limiting the power of the foreign monarchs. Already, in the time of the Longobards, there were established thirty principalities, under local rulers bearing the title of duke, count, or baron, which gradually became hereditary. The cities of Southern Italy had their own dukes, and at the close of the seventh century Venice elected her first Doge. In the middle of the eighth century, the pontiffs of Rome assumed the language and power of sovereigns. When Charlemagne succeeded the Lombard kings, he left the dukes in their dignities, which, if the oath of allegiance that he required them to take remained unbroken, were allowed to descend to their heirs. Towards the close of the ninth century, the nobles were so powerful that they attempted to elect an Italian king, and would doubtless have succeeded had they not quarrelled among themselves, and had they not been opposed by the Popes. Through the dissensions of the aristocracy Italy was given over to plunder, and again became an easy prey to a Northern conqueror. Otho “annexed” the peninsula to his German dominions, and made a grant of the best lands to his own nobles. At the same time, he conferred great privileges on the Italian cities, and thus laid the foundation

of local republics. Although the long contest between Rome and the Empire, by giving rise to the contending parties of Guelfs and Ghibelines, had greatly weakened Italy, nevertheless Frederick Barbarossa in vain crossed the Alps again and again, and was finally obliged to confirm, by the treaty of Constance, the municipal privileges of the Lombard cities.

Italy was then, for a period, nearly covered with republics. Each important city became the seat of a local, and generally democratic government. The law of history which we are discussing manifested its working in all of the Italian states, just so far as their development was independent of powers foreign to themselves. At Amalfi, the government became by degrees popular, under the administration of a duke, and the city, occupying a most charming location, was for a long time the chosen seat of commerce in Southern Italy. Naples was a republic for four hundred years, and defended herself against the Saracens and the neighboring duchy of Benevento. Gaeta was also a republic, governed, like Amalfi and Naples, by an elective duke, or Doge. The three republics were cut short in their development by the conquering Normans. Benevento, the first established Lombard duchy, the antagonist of the Southern Italian republics, clung to aristocracy, and also fell a prey to conquerors. The states farther north passed through a larger arc in the circle of historical development, ere they were swept away by the tide of invasion. The free city of Perugia struggled with the papal power and that of the nobles, and, following the downward course from democracy to despotism, was finally subdued by Braccio da Montona, one of her own sons. Bologna obtained from Charles V. acknowledgment of her independence, and a charter granting to her inhabitants the choice of consuls, judges, and other magistrates. She fell a prey to family feuds, and thus democracy ended in oligarchy. Arezzo, the birthplace of every kind of genius, arrived at freedom, and was swallowed up by Florence. The same is true of Volterra. In Sienna we find almost a complete development, — monarchy, aristocracy, democracy, aristocracy again, then, before the last link in the chain was added, destruction by a rival state. Early in the twelfth century the Siennese threw off the yoke of Matilda. The nobles

soon gave way before the power of the people, and were banished. After the battle of Monte Aperto, celebrated by Dante, many of the exiled nobles returned, and some of them became traders. Thus was formed a new burgher aristocracy, composed of the rich citizens, which undermined popular liberty. The free city, after having bowed her neck to the yoke of Pandolfo Petrucci and other tyrants, became a victim of the Medici, who stripped her of every remnant of freedom, and made her a slave. In Lucca and Pisa we trace the same order of events.

Florence affords a complete example of historical development. She began in monarchy and ended in despotism, passing through the intermediate stages of oligarchy and democracy. Her aristocracy was the most turbulent in Italy, cherishing in its bosom faction within faction, and showing from time to time the double elective affinities of compound parties. The fickle democracy was thus a long time saved from becoming the prey of oligarchy, and the Florentine republic is one of the glories of Italian history. The same course of political events shows itself at Genoa. At the commencement of the tenth century she declared her independence. Consuls were elected, and the people took part in the administration. As elsewhere in the Italian republics, contentions arose among the aristocratic families. One foreign master after another was called in to settle the disputes of oligarchic factions. The constitution of Doria saved the city from foreign rule for two hundred and seventy years; but the spirit of discord only slumbered. New masters were sought, each one of whom might have said, with Louis XI., "The Genoese give themselves to me, and I give them to the Devil." In all the prominent cities of the Lombard League, — Milan, Brescia, Verona, Padua, Mantua, Piacenza, Modena, Pavia, Vicenza, and others, — we find the same order of political facts, and the same end of liberty. Not only city contended against city, but Guelfs and Ghibelines divided each city against itself. Civil war did its worst, and everywhere democracy ended in domestic tyranny.

Venice was in no way politically connected with the rest of Italy. Her first Doge, or duke, was chosen about the close of

the seventh century ; and such was his power, that he might rather be called an elective monarch than the chief magistrate of a republic. The grand council of four hundred and eighty, chosen in 1173, laid the foundation of an oppressive oligarchy, which ceased to exist only with the state itself. When the people conspired against the usurpation of the aristocracy, then was chosen, for the punishment of treason, the famous Council of Ten, which endured for five hundred years. The sword cut both ways, — patricians as well as people felt the power of such an irresponsible police. The poor old Doge, Marino Falieri, had a beautiful young wife, and, with or without cause, becoming jealous of some of the Venetian “bloods,” conspired with the people against the aristocracy. Hence the three Inquisitors of State, whose names were known only to the Council of Ten. Such a despotism the modern world has not elsewhere seen. The Venetian democracy, gloriously foretold in 1848–49, is a thing of the future.

Rome, like Venice, has remained the prey of an aristocracy. It is true that Cola di Rienzi was chosen tribune of the people, but in less than a year he gave way before the power of the nobles.*

The political development of Italy must not, however, be confounded with that of the small states into which she was divided. Democracy was local, not general. At the same time with the municipal republics, feudalism existed throughout the peninsula. In the plains, near the cities, the nobles joined their fortunes with those of the citizens, but the mountains were everywhere studded with the castles of knights, who, for the most part, maintained their allegiance to the foreign Emperors. In the middle of the fourteenth century, when famine and plague had swept away more than half the population of Italy, the *condottieri*, mostly Germans, plundered the country from end to end. In no European nation

* An incident, related by Nicolini, beautifully shows how the people of Rome are still influenced by traditions of former greatness and liberty. “In the time of our short republic, we were once moved to tears by seeing some Trasteverini throw off their hats, and spontaneously, without being told or taught, go and kiss these magical and once respected letters, S. P. A. R.”

It was during the revolution of 1848–49. Every day one may hear, at Rome, the Trasteverini singing, in mournful tone, *Roma non è tanto bella che prima*.

has feudalism struck so deep a root as in Italy, nor flourished so long. The old nobility was strengthened by the new, — the descendants of popular magistrates, who broke the power of the mediæval republics. In fact, aristocracy was the leading political influence of Italy, considered in her unity, from the reign of Charlemagne till the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle.

During the forty-four years of peace that preceded the invasion of the French in 1792, feudalism was first effectually broken in Italy, by the rulers themselves. The Emperor Joseph II. abolished many feudal institutions, checked the clergy, and favored learning in that portion of the peninsula which he governed. The Grand Duke Leopold gave to Tuscany the code that bears his name; and Charles III. and his son Ferdinand, in Naples, adopted reforms which nearly abolished feudal rights and jurisdictions. Even in ecclesiastical Rome, the minor branches of administration were reformed, and the Jesuits banished. The despots, like the tyrants in Greece, were overthrowing the long-standing aristocracy, and preparing the way for freedom. Napoleonism in the peninsula has awakened Italy to a consciousness of her rights and her unity. The despots, it is true, have returned, and are ruling with an iron hand, but the state of passive rebellion in a people, which requires such a rule, is very clearly indicative of the future.

Thus Italy, although exhibiting here and there minor and subordinate political developments, more perfect in form, has just arrived at the dawn of a national democracy, having passed from the early monarchical government, through a long and turbulent period of aristocracy, to the gloomy despotism whose darkness is made visible by the first faint light of a new day of liberty. Whether the democracy of Italy shall assume the type of that of England, or that of America, she is destined to realize her unity and her freedom.

Although the history of Germany is very complicated in its details, nevertheless we find in the development of the Germanic people a striking and simple illustration of our great law of history. The condition of monarchy is fulfilled under Charlemagne. With him properly began the Holy Roman Empire, although this name was not given to it until after-

ward. The imperial dignity descended to the family of Charlemagne as a right until 888. Then, with the election of the Emperors, commenced the long reign of aristocracy. We find very early in Germanic history lay and ecclesiastical chiefs, — princes, dukes, counts, margraves, landgraves, barons, archbishops, bishops, and abbots, — who laid the foundation of small sovereign states. The Emperor was at first chosen by all the princes, but during the interregnum from 1197 to 1272 the arch-princes, the *Kurfürsten*, assumed the exclusive right, and, by uniting among themselves in the election of Charles IV., in 1347, secured the power. The aristocracy of Germany made the crown of the empire dependent upon itself, while it was dependent upon the crown for nothing. It is true that the individual members of the aristocracy were restrained by the rules of their unity, by the conditions of their existence as a body; but the body itself was the true sovereign of the land. Such an oligarchy of *local* monarchs destroyed all vital unity in the Germanic people, and made the first nation in Europe, as an empire, the weakest. While the oligarchy of *Kurfürsten* ruled the general state, each prince at home was checked by the petty castellated lords, who hunted, quarrelled, pillaged, levied black-mail, drank, blasphemed, kept citizens in continual fear for property and life, and thus rendered social order an impossibility. These minor nobles held their fiefs directly from the Emperor. For this reason, the local sovereigns, who stood in the relation of an oligarchy to the empire, were locally greatly limited in their power by the free knights and barons. "From the princes and prelates, possessed of extensive territories, down to the free knights and barons, whose domains consisted of a castle and a few acres of mountain and forest ground, each was a petty monarch upon his own property, independent of all control but the remote supremacy of the Emperor."*

Feudalism in Germany reached its culminating point in the fifteenth century. The characteristic weakness of every aristocracy — internal discord — led the way to its destruction. Among the privileges conferred upon the German

* Sir Walter Scott, Preface to his translation of Goethe's *Götz von Berlichingen*.

barons by their constitutions was that of private warfare. The evils attending these private wars or feuds, as the empire advanced in civilization, became fearfully conspicuous : —

“ Each petty knight was by law entitled to make war upon his neighbors, without any further ceremony than three days’ previous defiance by a written form called *Fehdbrief*. Even the Golden Bull, which remedied so many evils in the Germanic body, left this dangerous privilege in full vigor. In time, the residence of every free baron became a fortress, from which, as his passions or avarice dictated, sallied a band of marauders to back his quarrel, or to collect an extorted revenue from the merchants who presumed to pass through his domain. At length whole bands of these freebooting nobles used to league together for the purpose of mutual defence against their more powerful neighbors, as likewise for that of predatory excursions against the princes, free towns, and ecclesiastic states of the empire, whose wealth tempted the needy barons to exercise against them their privilege of waging private war. These confederacies were distinguished by various titles expressive of their object : we find among them the Brotherhood of the Mace, the Knights of the Bloody Sleeve, &c., &c. If one of the brotherhood was attacked, the rest marched without delay to his assistance ; and thus, though individually weak, the petty feudatories maintained their ground against the more powerful members of the empire. Their independence and privileges were recognized and secured to them by many edicts ; and though hated and occasionally oppressed by the princes and ecclesiastic authorities, to whom in return they were a scourge and a pest, they continued to maintain tenaciously the good old privilege (as they termed it) of *Faustrecht*, which they had inherited from their fathers.”

The first direct blow to feudalism in Germany was struck by the Emperor Maximilian. By the memorable edict of August 7th, 1495, the right of private war was abrogated. Othello’s occupation was gone. The ban of the empire, a sentence at once secular and spiritual, an anathema containing the doom of outlawry and excommunication, to be enforced by the Imperial Chamber then instituted, was the terrible penalty of any infraction of the edict. The barons were conquered, and the spirit of feudalism was broken.

It must here be remarked, that the aristocracy in Germany, as elsewhere in Europe, was ecclesiastical as well as secular. The people had to measure not only arms against the tem-

poral power, but also their intelligence against that of the spiritual power. In this respect the states of modern Europe differ from those of ancient Greece. While various orders of feudal nobility gradually usurped the monarch's authority and privileges, the papal power was limited by councils, cardinals, bishops, and the heads of various monastic orders. Secular and ecclesiastical oligarchies alike disregarded the people's rights, and almost always united to keep them down. Light, however, both political and spiritual, reached the lower classes. In the crusades, the peasant and the prince found themselves side by side, suffering alike from privation and disease, dying side by side by famine or in battle. The stern necessities of a common lot for high and low, taught the survivors a lesson of human equality. The crusades opened a highway of commerce between the East and the West. Some of the Italian maritime cities were fortunate in already possessing ships, and therefore reaped the first harvest of traffic; but, naturally enough, a new carrying trade over the Alps was established, and free commercial cities grew up and prospered in Southern and Central Germany. Exchange of goods brings with it exchange of ideas, and thus the human mind is awakened. Besides, printing was invented, so that all products of human intelligence could be rapidly and cheaply multiplied. The war of the peasants in Southern Germany, and the appearance of the Hussites in Bohemia, of the Albigenes in France, of the followers of Wickliffe in England, were so many signs of a desire for spiritual freedom on the part of the people. The human mind and heart have within themselves fountains of liberty in their spontaneous thought and feeling; for God's intellectual and moral image is stamped upon each soul, making it a participator in the Divine freedom.

In all these ways the German people were prepared for political and spiritual democracy. The ignorance and cupidity of the priesthood so disgusted and wounded them, that they were ready to listen to the religious assurance of any bold, strong man, and to break their connection with the long-standing and awful power of Rome. The revival of ancient learning, after the downfall of the Byzantine empire, awakened studious minds, furnishing the controversialist with solid shafts

of logic, and the potent satirist with polished arrows of wit. When the intrepid monk, Martin Luther, placed himself at the head of the spiritual democracy, the time was ripe, and then began a work which many melancholy failures had long foreshadowed. The Protestant religion is a system of intellectual and moral freedom. With its proclamation are recognized the worth and rights of the individual. We must not, however, look for the end in the beginning. The Reformation was only the dawn of spiritual democracy, not its consummation. Lutheranism in Germany took a half-monarchical form; Calvinism in Geneva, France, the Netherlands, and Scotland was alternately democratic and aristocratic; while the Church of England was and has remained a religious oligarchy.

Thus with Luther and Maximilian commenced the prospective democracy of Central Europe. The political aristocracy received its first heavy blow from the first despot. Luther also, the leader of an *antagonistic* democracy, was a tyrant in doctrine. Despotism in Germany, where the Teutonic character has always exhibited its centrifugal force, has divided itself, so that there are two or three dozens of tyrants, instead of one. Nevertheless, the transition from oligarchy to democracy is there clearly marked, as in Greece, by a period of despotism. Napoleonism has there had the same meaning as elsewhere in Europe. Napoleon presented himself as a leader of the ripening democracy, and the masses everywhere followed him. He became in turn a despot, and his power vanished, for democratic Europe left him. The vast standing army of the Germanic states is only the body-guard of the tyrants, to protect them from the people. The terrible, omnipresent police, is but an organized band of political spies, to watch for the first signs of a gathering storm of democracy. The easy overthrow of the despots in 1848-49 shows the might of a democracy which is growing wiser as well as stronger. The intellectual freedom of Germany exhibits itself, in the mean time, in her rich literature. A distinguished American essayist has said that a German could philosophize the soul out of man and God out of the universe, but he must not say a word against the house of Hapsburg. This is perfectly true, but the fear felt by the house of Hapsburg quite as closely in-

dicates the free spirit of the Germans, as the entire statement illustrates their liberty of philosophic speech. For Germany there is a near future of political unity and freedom, or history is but a deceptive and irregular succession of events, and not the methodical teaching of God's providence.

In France, Charlemagne again fulfils the condition of monarchy. With him begins the modern cycle of political development, and the first organized national society. After his death, Louis le Débonnaire, the least capable of his sons, was wholly unable to govern France. Feudal aristocracy, therefore, speedily developed itself without royal hinderance. Perhaps for this very reason France has taken the lead of all the Continental nations in political growth. In the midst of social chaos a new order swiftly shaped itself, that of the great feudal lords, who were indocile and turbulent towards the nominal king and oppressive towards the vassals. Under such an oligarchy industry was everywhere paralyzed by the most odious exactions; justice was outraged by laws that mocked human nature; legislative, executive, and judicial power was in the hands of ignorant men, governed only by interest or caprice. In the people, however, who suffered in silence,—whose declaration of independence St. Cæsarius, anticipating ten centuries, pronounced in the memorable words, *Men are the serfs of God alone*,—was the source of a new power, to which the king appealed against the nobles. Under Louis le Gros, the commons, the origin of the *bourgeoisie*, appeared in a struggle with the feudal lords. King and people were oppressed by a brutal aristocracy, and very willingly lent each other aid in a struggle for rights and privileges. The inhabitants of larger towns, and the middle class, united with the sovereign, and oligarchy received its first check. The communal revolution of the twelfth century was the real commencement of the great revolution of 1789.

France was much in advance of Italy, Spain, Germany, Flanders, and England, in the first efficient steps towards national liberty. She had already taken the lead in the crusades, and had reaped the earliest harvest of glory from Oriental battle-fields. She had proclaimed her free thought in vigorous philosophic discussion and trenchant theological contro-

versy. The commons of France were united in a consolidated *Tiers État*, while the citizens of the free cities of Italy were devouring one another in civil war.

St. Louis, at once warrior, statesman, and Christian, maintained peace among the great feudal seigniors, the nobles, and the *bourgeoisie*, so that, under him, the kingdom of France was established in its integrity; there was thenceforth no danger of its being divided, like Germany, into petty kingdoms. The power of the kings, being thus united with that of the commons, gradually increased, until it became absolute over all classes. We may say, in general terms, that the French kings, from Philip Augustus to Louis XI., struggled for the *maintenance* of their power; from Louis XI. to Louis XIV., to become the *ministers* of their own power. The first period was that of oligarchy; the second, that of increasing despotism. The aristocracy yielded little by little, obstinately contesting every inch of ground, until it made its final effort in the Fronde. The Grand Monarque, firmly seated upon the throne of St. Louis, beholding the proudest nobles reduced to royal vassals, and feeling no gratitude or obligation to the commons who had been used by successive kings as the instrument for gaining such power, could say without exaggeration that *he was the state*.

"Louis XIV.," says Mignet, "kept the springs of absolute monarchy too long in tension, and used them too violently. Irritated by the troubles of his youth, enamored of rule, he broke all resistance, interdicted all opposition; — that of the aristocracy, which was employed in revolts, — that of the Parliament, which was employed in remonstrances, — that of Protestants, which was shown by a liberty of conscience which the Church regarded as heretical, and royalty as factious. Louis XIV. subjected the great by calling them to court, where they received in pleasures and favors the price of their independence. The Parliament, which had hitherto been the instrument of the crown, wished to become its counterpoise, and the prince haughtily imposed upon it a submission and silence of sixty years. Finally, the revocation of the Edict of Nantes was the completion of that work of despotism. An arbitrary government not only desires not to be resisted, but also to be approved and imitated. After having brought conduct into subjection, he persecuted conscience, and when political antagonists failed, he sought his victims among religious dissenters. Louis XIV. was occupied at home against

heretics ; abroad, against Europe. Oppression found ambitious men as counsellors, dragoons as servants, success as an encouragement ; the plagues of France were covered with laurels, and her groans were stifled by the chants of victory. But at length men of genius died, victories ceased, industry emigrated, money disappeared, and it was clearly seen how despotism exhausts its means by its success, and devours its future in advance." — *Histoire de la Révolution Française*, Vol. I. p. 9.

Every one knows with what minor variations in form despotism continued until the dawn of the Revolution. In the mean time, the people, although ignored by the kings whom they had aided in gaining absolute power, and oppressed by unequal taxation, received light from various quarters, and became animated with the spirit of liberty. The contest in France was first literary and religious, then political. "L'unité du dix-huitième siècle," says Michelet,* "est dans la préparation de ce grand événement [revolution] : d'abord la guerre littéraire et la guerre religieuse, puis la grand et sanglante bataille de la liberté politique." Mental freedom in France took a philosophic and literary, rather than a religious direction. Beholding, on the one hand, the injustice, corruption, and debauchery of the court, and, on the other, the bloody persecution of dissenters, the French people gave themselves up to the guidance of the new priests of Reason, who flooded Europe with every species of literature. What Gervinus says too exclusively of Rousseau, we may apply, with some limitations, to the general philosophic and literary spirit of France.

"He preached entire freedom, and experience had no weight with him compared with the demands of reason for the management of the state. And he preached this to all, and in a manner adapted to the general comprehension, by an open attack on every existing institution. He traced the root of the evil in the submission to tyranny in the present day, and not in the remains of the feudal system. He abused Saumaise and Grotius, who had systematized despotism, and he opposed the most exaggerated rights of man to their theories on slavery and our animal nature. He derided, on a political ground, Luther's doctrine of passive obedience, and that God in his wrath will punish wicked kings. If we must obey a bad ruler, there is so much the more reason that we should select a good one ; it is well for a people to submit to a

* *Précis de l'Histoire de France*, ch. 23

power stronger than themselves, but it is better, when they have strength, to shake it off. In these aphorisms spake the Calvinism of Geneva. A political revolution, as well as a religious reformation, was destined to be preached from this refuge of the free spirit of France. Old Calvinistic political doctrines lay at the foundation of Rousseau's theories. Junius Brutus (Languet), in 1577, declared the law, that the force of a silent natural compact among the people is greater than the will of princes, and entitles them to enforce the government of law, because the state is composed of the people, and not of the king. It was thus also that John Milton declared the rights of man and of a people to freedom, as natural and inalienable. By the Calvinistic right of the community to interpret the religious law, and practically to demonstrate the political theories of legislation, the sovereignty already lay in the people. Rousseau labored on in the same ideas. He inveighed against the monstrous proposition, that a man should, by the chance of birth, reign as an hereditary monarch over a nation, and that children should rule over old men, and the few over the many. He opposed a natural right to the hierarchical doctrine of the state, — the legal fiction of a social compact, to the theological invention of the divine right of monarchs. If revelation points to monarchy, he pointed to reason and natural right in favor of the sovereign people. He therefore hated the English Constitution, which Montesquieu praised. His ideal of a form of government was that of the early Teutonic petty democracies, which actually existed in Switzerland, America, and the Netherlands. The gulf which lay between his theories and the condition of all the great states in Europe did not disturb his convictions. He was above all consideration of realities and existing relations; for he trusted that the future would dispense with the present, as well as with the past. What was superannuated wrong, before the inalienable primitive rights of man? Rousseau thoughtlessly advised the people to make use of their physical strength to enforce their rights; and in this lay the enormous power of his doctrines. The idea of a social compact as the commencement of a state is only a new illusion in place of the old. But if we survey the different epochs of history when a people politically matured could no longer suffer an arbitrary government, every revolution is a confirmation of Rousseau's principle, and his principle is the banner of every revolution. The state does not commence, but is at its acme, in the sphere of popular rule. States originate in social compacts, but the government of the people, for the most part, belongs to colonies, off-shoots of states which have arrived at maturity. The example of North America had evidently acted upon Rousseau's views. He adopted the really

exceptional circumstances of that country as a foundation for his theories, which returned to America a rule which could be universally applied. For Rousseau, by a remarkable instinct, predicted the whole spirit of the coming age, which lay brooding over the extraordinary events which soon took place on both sides of the ocean." *—*Einleitung*, pp. 131 – 133. Translation, (Bohn's Series,) pp. 97, 98.

The French Revolution was the people's bloody declaration of independence. It was the inauguration of democracy in Europe, and was rendered necessary by the despotism of princes.

"It not only modified the political power," says Mignet, "it changed the whole interior existence of the nation. The forms of mediæval society still existed. The soil was divided into hostile provinces, men were distributed into rival classes. The nobility had lost all its power, although it preserved its distinctions; the people possessed no rights, royalty had no limits, France was delivered up to the confusion of an arbitrary ministry, particular *régimes*, and corporate privileges. For this abusive order the Revolution substituted one more conformed to justice and more appropriate to our times. It replaced the arbitrary by law, privilege by equality. It delivered men from the distinctions of classes, the soil from the barriers of provinces, industry from the fetters of corporations, agriculture from feudal subjections and tithes, property from the restrictions of entails, and reduced everything to a single state, a single right, and a single people." — *Révolution Française*, p. 9.

Europe was not yet ripe; the half-educated, or rather the miseducated people, injured their triumph by fatal excesses, and the despots of neighboring kingdoms united to replace their brother on the throne of France. Democracy had found a leader of wonderful genius in Napoleon; but, as we have already said, when he reached supreme power, he forgot the people, ruled for himself alone, and became a despot. Again and again the French Revolution has repeated itself, with the same results. The nation is alive to its rights, and only yields

* Gervinus is continually wanting in the perception of historical sequence. His mind is large, generous, honest, and profoundly appreciative; therefore he is the best of all historians of literature, while, being deficient in logical exactness of reasoning, he often draws wrong conclusions from sound political premises. Liberty in America was not a growth of the soil, but was established by Europeans, migrating thither from all states. American freedom was not a result of local circumstances, but the ripening of a fruit that began growing in Europe with the earliest struggles for political and religious independence. But we are anticipating.

from time to time to necessity. Each new leader fails the people, and, with the army at his back, re-establishes the tyranny. The present despot has betrayed all trusts, and rules an outraged nation with the sword. The mouth of republican France is gagged, a cannon is pointed at her breast, a political spy stares her impudently in the face, while she silently mourns over hope deferred.*

It is not necessary to dwell long upon the constitutional history of Spain, in order to find a new confirmation of our historical principle. The peninsula beyond the Pyrenees has been the battle-ground of epochs, civilizations, and religions; yet we find there in modern times a perfectly regular political development. Owing to a variety of circumstances, the early monarchy of Spain was divided, thus to speak, into several local branches, like the existing despotism in Germany. Feudalism there took root early, and the great lords soon became the real masters of the different states. When Aragon and Castile were united by the fortunate marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella, the nobles in both kingdoms, insolent and rapacious as elsewhere, not only treated the sovereign as a plaything, but ruled the people without the least regard to natural human right. The commons of Spain, however, had long time appeared in the background. They had already made their voice heard in the Cortes, and were quite ready to support the throne in an effort to break the power of the haughty nobles. Ferdinand and Isabella appeared upon the stage of history at the same time with Louis XI. of France and Henry VII. of England, and, like them, resolved to free the throne from its dependence upon an irresponsible

* We "assisted," not many months ago, at a representation of Beaumarchais's Figaro, in the *Théâtre Français*, at Paris. In the third scene of the fifth act, Figaro utters himself as follows: "I am told that in Madrid [Paris] has been established a system of liberty in the sale of products, which extends even to those of the press; and that, provided I say nothing in my writings of the authority, nothing of worship, nothing of politics, nothing of ethics, nothing of people in place, nothing of bodies in credit, nothing of the opera, nothing of other shows, nothing of anybody that pertains to anything, I can print everything freely, under the inspection of two or three censors." The applause was carried to the pitch of madness. The scene revealed the condition and feeling of France. Every one understood why he applauded, while he would not have dared to express it in words even to his nearest friend. The applause, too, was unanimous, as well as intense.

oligarchy. The integrity of Isabella, joined with the princely craft of Ferdinand, made them much abler than the neighboring sovereigns, and under their skilful hands the work of humbling the proud Spanish grandees went on apace. It is not necessary here to dwell upon the means of their rapid and complete success. The revenue of Castile was increased by Isabella thirty-fold, without any burdensome exactions, and Ferdinand raised himself, from one of the weakest princes in Europe, to the rank of the most celebrated.*

Spanish despotism began with Ferdinand, and culminated with Philip II., when it threatened to inundate all Europe. The tide was turned back by democracy in the Netherlands; the spirit of Romanic unity was broken for ever, and Teutonic Protestantism, with its expansive liberalizing and civilizing power, was saved. Since then, Spain, for the most part, has followed the political fortunes of France. The old national spirit is not dead, the Spanish peasantry is the finest in Europe, commerce is reviving, industry is awakening, and the people, united in misfortunes, made wiser and more prudent by unsuccessful revolutions, look with firm faith to a future of liberty. Spain has been carefully watched and guarded by the consolidated despotism of Europe, her people have been crushed by venal military leaders, and insulted by a debauched court; but, when the dawn of freedom comes, she will not be found wanting.

It would be very easy to trace the same order of political events in Portugal; but the history of that once glorious nation is so intimately connected with Spanish history, that we

* "Even a republican statesman like Machiavelli," writes Gervinus, (using, for the most part, Machiavelli's words,) "could not be blind to the extraordinary advantages to the people and to the state which grew out of the absolutism of the prince. He looked beyond the means, to the object attained by them, — beyond the one evil, to the general welfare; and he divined the spirit of modern history, when, prophesying over its cradle, he clothed the historical experience of past ages in the words of an austere theory, — that, to found a new order of the state on the ruins of the deceased forms of government of the Middle Ages, the unlimited authority of one individual became a necessity, and even a benefit, supposing its existence to be only temporary: it would then be a preparation for the government of law, and a school for freedom." We have nowhere else seen even an approach to a right appreciation of Machiavelli. We hope ere long to enter into a new and thorough discussion of the great Florentine statesman's political principles.

could hardly regard such an example as an independent illustration of the law under discussion.*

In Switzerland we find a striking exemplification of the same law, although there the transition from monarchy to oligarchy took place without the retention of a nominal sovereign, and that from aristocracy to democracy without the intervention of a despot. Nowhere in Europe has there been a political development so completely normal. Switzerland was part of the Frankish empire, that is, of a monarchy. In 1032, it was united to the German empire. It was then divided into a multitude of petty fiefs, whose possessors were vassals of the Emperor; and this was the beginning of aristocracy. The administration of affairs was confided to the dukes of Zähringen, who were real benefactors of the country. In 1218, that line became extinct, and the country passed into the hands of a factious aristocracy. In 1308, the cantons of Uri, Schwytz, and Unterwalden threw off the yoke of the Emperor, and formed the nucleus of the confederation. The revolution under Tell was the beginning of national independence, but not of democracy. Maximilian undertook to reconquer the Swiss, but failed, and was obliged to sign the treaty of Basle (A. D. 1499), by which he renounced his pretensions. In the first half of the sixteenth century political dissensions arose, and the Reformation divided Switzerland against herself. At this epoch we mark the dawn of civil and religious liberty. During the whole of the intermediate period, that is, from 1308, the government had been in the hands of an unrestrained oligarchy. The people, except in a few towns, were not only without political power, but often sorely oppressed by the nobles. Democracy only showed itself prospectively at the Reformation. The Revolution of 1789 effected the first real change for the masses. The French conquered the country in 1798, and imposed upon it a constitution, which was acquiesced in rather than

* It is curious to find in Camoens an appeal to the king against the oppression of the aristocracy, that liberty might be established : —

“Snatch from the tyrant noble's hand the sword,
And be the rights of human kind restored.”

Canto X. Str. 151.

accepted. Napoleon presented the Swiss with the *Nouvel Acte de Médiation*, which was willingly received by the people and the aristocracy. In the new times the democratic element was increasing and taking form in the state. The neutrality of the country was acknowledged by the great powers in 1815. The Revolution of 1830 had its counter-stroke among the Alps, and the democratic element gained the ascendancy. After the short and bloody contest that overthrew the Sonderbund, the Confederation was established upon a thoroughly democratic basis. Since the very recent troubles in Neuchâtel have been settled, civil and religious freedom is everywhere guaranteed in Switzerland. Thus, in the centre of Europe, there is a constitutional and representative democracy, with equal political liberty for all, thoroughly organized, and maintained by a brave and capable people. Switzerland is an example to Europe, and an earnest of the coming time.

In the Netherlands, Charlemagne introduced feudalism, which has everywhere determined the form of aristocracy in modern states. Under his feeble successors, the great vassals of the crown maintained almost an independent sovereignty. In order to strengthen their own power, they conferred privileges upon their feudatories, and thus planted the seeds of democracy. The clergy, by various means, fair and foul, became a powerful and independent body. During the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries, the Netherlands were divided into small dominions, whose princes acknowledged a very limited allegiance, either to the German Emperor or to the Frankish kings. The power of the oligarchy was complete, that of the sovereign merely nominal. Among the chiefs, the Count of Flanders was the first. This countship, in 1383, fell to the house of Burgundy. The prince of that family, partly by marriages, partly by force, partly by purchase and voluntary submission, obtained supreme authority over what became the seventeen provinces of the Netherlands. The rule of the Dukes of Burgundy was comparatively mild, and the nobles, to secure the good-will of the people, the only instrument of maintaining their power, granted them many privileges. Thus, in the Netherlands, democracy was called into existence by the aristocracy, to

support them against the sovereign, while nearly everywhere else in Europe the kings joined with the people against the turbulent nobility. Mary, daughter of Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, who fell in an encounter with the Swiss, received the Netherlands as a dowry, on her marriage with Maximilian. Her grandson, Charles V., was therefore born king of the Low Countries, and of Spain. With the accession of Charles commenced despotism in that fertile and flourishing country. He was supported by foreign troops, and was under no necessity of appealing to the people against the nobles, in order to gain his ends. The people were attached to the aristocracy, and both made common cause against the tyrant, who threatened to reduce all Europe to Catholic and monarchical unity. The Reformation, which contained the spirit of mental and religious democracy, soon spread from Germany, France, and England to the Netherlands. The long and bloody struggle against Philip II. for national independence, is one of the most interesting chapters of modern history; but we must here confine ourselves strictly to political results. Spain and despotism failed, a modified liberty triumphed, but democracy was not established. As elsewhere in Europe the kings used the people to gain power, and then ignored them, so here the aristocracy did the same thing. The subsequent political dissensions, and the intemperate quarrels of the Calvinists and Arminians, show us what a limited amount of liberty was secured. It is enough for our present purpose to say that Belgium and Holland, whose governments are by no means the worst on the Continent, are simply following in the train of other European nations. The spirit of democracy, first awakened by the great feudal lords of the Netherlands, has been gradually gaining strength up to the present hour. The kings of both countries are ruling wisely, by granting, from time to time, new privileges to their subjects, as the spirit of the age demands. The people that were capable of a most glorious struggle against political and religious tyranny in the sixteenth century, will not be found wanting when the time comes for self-government.

In the Scandinavian states, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, we discern also a clear confirmation of our law; but, inas-

much as we do not there find any striking variations in form, we pass by them, in order not to weary our readers by multiplying examples.

In England, we find the condition of early monarchy fulfilled under the Anglo-Saxon, Danish, Saxon, and Norman kings, and the one king of the house of Blois. For our present purpose, it is not necessary to trace the origin of the old nobility. We find the sovereigns of the house of Plantagenet contending with the aristocracy for supreme power in the state. Magna Charta, so much vaunted by the English, wrung by necessity from King John, and soon ignored by him, secured liberty to the barons, clergy, and gentlemen, rather than to the people. His successor, Henry III., was not strong enough to cope with the aristocracy, and became a prisoner of the twenty-four barons, at whose head was Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, and son of him who slaughtered the Albigenses in France. The first appeal to the people in England was made by this same Leicester, who called a Parliament composed of two knights from every shire, and deputies from boroughs hitherto regarded as too insignificant to be allowed a share in legislation. Hence, the House of Commons, the bulwark of British liberty, the leading power and preponderating democratic element in the state. Edward II. fell a victim to the nobles and his own wicked queen. Edward III., however, a great warrior and able statesman, not only tamed the turbulent barons, but laid the foundation of English national prosperity.

"During this reign," says Turner, "our navy established its preponderance over the most celebrated fleets that were then accustomed to navigate the British Channel; our Parliament enjoyed, in full and upright exercise, those constitutional powers which the nation has long learned to venerate as its best inheritance; our manufactures and commerce began to exhibit an affluence and expansive growth, and to be conducted on the principles of public improvement; our clergy evinced a disposition to emancipate themselves from the Papal despotism, and some to exercise a just freedom of thought on the most important of all human concerns; the lineaments of our prose literature became distinctly discernible; the pursuit of the mathematical and natural sciences, and the art of reasoning, at one or both of our venerable Universities, was

ardent and successful; our poetry assumed the attractive form with which its life, sympathy, utility, and immortality are most surely connected; and our manners displayed a moral sentiment, which, though somewhat fantastic, yet always pure, contributed to soften the horrors of war, and has led to that more cultivated feeling which, continually increasing and refining, has made Englishmen distinguished for their generosity, magnanimity, and honor."— *History of England*, Vol. II. p. 144.

The tables were turned again during the reign of his successor. The times were not ripe. Richard II. did not understand how to use Wat Tyler and his men of Kent against the factious aristocracy, by granting some popular privileges. The people showed their democratic spirit, not only by marching upon London rather than pay the groat tax, but also by listening to Wickliffe's words of religious liberty. Henry IV. was not strong enough for the nobles, and, instead of strengthening his hands by granting favors to the people, he persecuted reformers, and was instrumental in disgracing the statute-books by a law for burning heretics. The Commons exhibited the growing spirit of English liberty by advising the king to seize all the temporalities of the Church, and by petitioning that the clergy should be subject to the civil tribunals. The first king of the house of Lancaster owed his throne to popular revolt, and was compelled to adopt popular principles. Under him the House of Commons advanced in importance and authority. Then followed the long War of the Roses, during which period England was governed by an oligarchy, by nobles contending with one another for power. When the houses of York and Lancaster had exhausted themselves in civil war, Henry VII., the first Tudor, ascended the throne. With him began despotism. He ruled for himself, not for his people; thought only of the throne, not of the nation. He neither united with the aristocracy against the commonalty, nor with the commonalty against the aristocracy. "He kept a straight hand on his nobility," says Bacon, "and chose rather to advance clergymen and lawyers, which were more obsequious to him, but had less interest in the people; which made for his absoluteness, but not for his safety."* Under Henry VIII. despotism

* Henry VII., eighth paragraph from the end.

was at its height in England. During that bloody tyrant's reign, the spirit of liberty was not absent, but those whose breasts were filled with it suffered martyrdom, or remained silent. "*Trepidatur a circumsedentibus, diffugiunt imprudentes. At, quibus altior intellectus, resistunt defixi, et Neronem intuentes.*"* The Tudors were all despots. Blood is imperishably associated with the name of Mary in history. The literary splendor of Elizabeth's reign, great as it is, cannot make us forget the rigor of her political rule and the unhappy end of her "sister" Mary. Liberty, however, was all the time silently gaining strength. The despicable King James, notwithstanding his frightfully despotic theories, was ridiculously imbecile. "He neither gave way gracefully to the advancing spirit of liberty, nor took vigorous measures to stop it, but retreated before it, with ludicrous haste, blustering and insulting as he retreated." Charles I., true to his tyrannical principles, resisted public opinion. "Hence his concessions were delayed until it mattered not whether he resisted or yielded, till the nation, which had long ceased to love or to trust him, had at last also ceased to fear him."† In a long struggle with the commons, he was stripped of most of his privileges, and was finally required to give up the executive power. Civil war ensued; the commons triumphed; the tyrant fell. The time had not come for democracy; the balance of power had passed from despotism to liberty, but liberty could not drive despotism from the field without a long struggle, and many partial failures. The revolution of Cromwell was an accident of circumstances, rather than a settled design of the English people. Under the Protector, freedom and Puritanism enjoyed a signal triumph, for which, however, the reign of the profligate and despotic Charles II. was a sad recompense. Rational liberty struggled, with varying fortune, while the throne of England was occupied by James II., but triumphed with William of Orange. From that hour to the present day the despotic element in the English government has been gradually giving way to principles of universal right and justice, embodied in popular reforms.

* Tacitus, speaking of the death of Britannicus.

† Edinburgh Review, Vol. LIV. p. 515.

“The British House of Commons, the representative of the British people, may, without exaggeration, be termed the most important popular assembly that has ever been brought together. A larger amount of money is annually submitted to its control than ever was placed at the disposal of any other assembly ; a population is affected by its decisions greater than any other assembly could ever directly reach by legislation, and a more extensive territory owns its legislative sway. In the direction of the affairs of the world, and in all quarters of the globe, the British House of Commons wields a more massive power and influence than ever fell to the lot of a similar assembly ; and, although it cannot in any particular interfere, as a legislative assembly, with the executive government of the empire, the principle seems to be established beyond question, that no executive government can continue in office in Britain, unless it have a majority of the representatives of the people in its favor. The Commons, also, having exclusive command over the national purse, have the constitutional power of suspending the payment of the army, navy, and all government officials, — in fact, of arresting the course of administrative government altogether. The real power of the Commons, therefore, has no assignable limit, and consequently all great questions of policy are virtually decided in the house of representatives.” — *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Art. *Government*.

There are still powerful monarchical and aristocratic elements in the British government, but liberty is in the ascendency, and the House of Commons and the free press are sufficient guaranties for the future. Democracy, rule *by* the people, not simply *for* the people, is the dominant principle in the state. Thus, in England, we find the development from patriarchal monarchy to Norman aristocracy, and from feudal oligarchy, through the despots of the houses of Tudor and Stuart, to modern constitutional liberty, — a most striking illustration of the great law of history, which we have already traced through so many national forms of civilization, both ancient and modern.

It only remains to speak of Russia and the United States of America. The former, politically considered, is the youngest, the latter the oldest of nations.

Russia is still an absolute monarchy. She has not yet passed through the first phase of civilization. The old Boyards, the hereditary nobility, were crushed by Peter the Great,

and the Russian Emperor has not yet been limited in his authority by an aristocracy. The mass of the people are still in a state of serfdom. The monarch is at the same time head of the state and head of the church. In him are united two powers, as in the case of the Pope and of the German Emperor in the Middle Age. The political development of Russia will doubtless be hastened by the example of Western Europe; but at present she is the friend of despotism, and alone upholds the tyrants against the increasing spirit of liberty. The Russian nobility, old and new, the Boyards and the civil *employés*, will, the course of history enables us safely to predict, soon occupy the Emperor to such an extent, that other European states will be left to settle their own affairs. England and Russia will never unite again to replace an expelled monarch upon the throne of inevitably democratic France. Even while we are writing this, we perceive that the Emperor is emancipating his own serfs, and is inviting the great Russian lords to follow his example. It is a movement of the very highest importance. It clearly shows that the time has already come when the throne feels the necessity of supporting its own power against the ablest nobility in Europe, by a tacit appeal to the people. We predict, without hesitation, that this movement, which seems to be passing almost unnoticed, will be found, after some centuries, to have been the commencement of popular liberty in the East of Europe. Perhaps, when the democracy of Western Europe shall have given way, like that of Rome, in the downward course of political events, to a new despotism, liberty will find a home in the land now overshadowed by ignorance and Muscovite tyranny. However these things may be, most certain it is that Russia is the nation of the future,—politically the youngest amongst her sisters.

Here, in the United States of America, we have the best form of democracy that has been attained in modern times. Our free government has not been the result of a local development. Those who settled in the North American colonies brought with them from the Old World the principles of liberty. The emigrants from England, France, Holland, Scandinavia, and Germany belonged, with few exceptions,

to the advanced party in the state. They were democrats in religion and politics. They were in the "foremost ranks of time," imbued with principles which had taken form in the communal revolutions of the Middle Age, and which had slowly gained strength during the evolutions of society. They were, politically speaking, the oldest Europeans, because they were animated by the spirit of the future, the spirit of democracy.

The North American colonists, however, did not wholly escape the influence of aristocracy. In Massachusetts was formed, at first, a Puritanic theocracy, as intolerant as the Papacy itself. New Amsterdam (New York) was, in the beginning, a Flemish town, with a municipality but little freer than that of Antwerp. Roger Williams established in Rhode Island an organized toleration, because he was driven away from Massachusetts by the rigid Puritans. A democracy, it is true, was founded in Connecticut, but disfigured by a fearfully stringent theocratic code. Penn, a democrat in principle, in practice an aristocrat, founded a Quaker republic in Pennsylvania. An oligarchical element was introduced in Virginia, with an exclusive church. Maryland was at first a feudal principality, and even at this day we find there a feeble echo of the vanished institutions of chivalry. Carolina was divided into eight lordships, with a landed aristocracy like that of England. These early aristocratic forms now look frightful to us, but we must remember that two centuries and half a dozen generations of men have in the mean time passed away. All the intolerance and persecution combined of the North American colonies, during the first fifty years of their existence, would not equal a single Spanish *auto da fé*. All that we can say of the colonists is, that they were among the best and most liberal men of their times. Democracy, which was the animating spirit of the great mass of emigrants, speedily developed itself in form, because the aristocratic element received no accession of strength from abroad, and, above all, because monarchy, fully occupied in maintaining itself against the growing principle of political liberty at home, left the daring men who had crossed the sea wholly to themselves.

"The theories of freedom in church and state," says Gervinus, "taught in the schools of philosophy in Europe, were here brought into

practice in the government of a small community. It was prophesied that the democratic attempts to obtain universal suffrage, a general elective franchise, annual parliaments, entire religious freedom, and the Miltonian right of schism, would be of short duration. But these institutions have not only maintained themselves here, but have spread from these petty states all over the Union. . . . They have given laws to one quarter of the globe, and, dreaded for their moral influence, they stand in the background of every democratic struggle in Europe. . . . The Puritans, in their first emigration, brought with them, more or less defined, the simple sketch of the edifice of their constitution, and carried it more or less into practice. The last finish, after the Declaration of Independence, was only the fulfilment of the first thought. No antiquity, no tradition, no history and experience prescribed a plan, or fettered them to extant materials. Aristocracy and the hierarchy were left behind them in Europe; the royal and parliamentary government of England was rejected. The instincts of simple nature, or reason in its simplest consequences, apart from all existing state organizations, led to the completion of the new edifice in the rising state, and they ventured, though with admirable prudence, on the great trial of extending it over an immense region, in spite of the prophecies which, in their small beginnings, promised them only a temporary success. . . . The Americans, in the first outbreak of their Revolution, indeed, appealed to their charters and self-created institutions, and endeavored to defend them as conceded rights; but at the separation, they ceased to look for justification of their rebellion, . . . they scorned to make a demand for rights and freedom which they claimed as natural and universal, and acted thus as much in conformity with the earliest principles of Protestantism, as with those of the latest theories which France had sent into the world a short time before. . . . The American Declaration of Independence commenced with an acknowledgment of the natural rights of man, of which no form of government can deprive him. . . . The people were entitled to change or depose any government which should deny these universal rights. . . . By the introduction of universal suffrage, they pronounced the great democratic maxim, that the government is the legal expression of the people's will. . . . The boast of the American Constitution is, not the skilful administration of many different elements, but the perfect fulfilment of a logical sequence, deduced from one single principle; — *freedom*, or the right to pay submission to nothing but law; and *equality*, the duty of all alike to obey one and the same law. . . . We are presented with the image . . . of a society, originating from all parts of the world, who are ready to receive any within their pale,

capable of adapting their form of government to any people who might wish to join their confederation, citizens of the world; not one great nation, but a federal union, in which each separate State strives to exalt its own sovereignty above that of the whole, as in each State the individual claims the greatest possible independence.* The feeling of individuality, the characteristic of modern times and of Protestantism, has here maintained its rights. The state exists more for the individual, than the individual for the state; the institutions of government are in the service of personal freedom; the independence of the man is more important than the duties of the citizen. The widest fields upon which the claims of man and the claims of the state have always contended, and still contend, like the church, are here entirely withdrawn from the state; and there only remain the broad and universal principles of legislation as a ground on which the government and the will of the individual can dispute. The entire picture of a new state, such as had never before been seen, lies now unrolled before us, after an interval of seventy years. . . . This new state, by its astonishing achievements in fortune and power, has suddenly surpassed all others, and the boldest political hazards † [*Wagnisse*] have succeeded, and mocked all sceptics. The government of the people, even when scattered over immeasurable tracts of country, has shown itself to be compatible with order and prosperity; the progressive Constitution, with the maintenance of old, confirmed usages; the freest exercise of religion, with piety; the absence of military power, with a warlike spirit; the enormous increase of a population thrown together by chance, with patriotism rooted in freedom; the administration and government through officials and representatives, chosen by and from among the poor, with order and economy in the household. This prosperity, combined with a simplicity in the Constitution which lays it open to the comprehension of the plainest understanding, has made this state and this Constitution a model which the most enlightened men, as well as the discontented, and the lovers of freedom in all nations, strive to imitate. Their Declaration of Rights, in 1776, has become the creed of liberalism throughout the world.”—*Einleitung*, p. 93 *et seq.*

From the very fact that our form of government is the most completely democratic of any in the world, we are, politically, the oldest among the nations. We are Europeans on a new field of action. A people, not a territory, constitutes a nation. Our age must be reckoned by the degrees of our political ad-

* We do not here follow the English translation, which is seemingly perverted.

† The English translator says *adventurers*.

vancement, not by the years during which we have occupied a certain portion of the Western continent. The American Constitution may be traced back to the birth and slow growth of the English House of Commons, to the formation of the *Tiers État* in France, to the Reformation of Luther and the preaching of Huss, to the mediæval republics of Italy, to the glorious struggle between the people and the patricians of ancient Rome, to the eloquence of Demosthenes and the assemblies of the free Greeks. We are not the people of the future, as is often and thoughtlessly said; we are most emphatically the people of the present. The fruits of modern civilization, which are ripening elsewhere, are here already mature. Whatever good comes to mankind from political freedom should now be realized by us. The world is following us, and the probability is that we shall lead it back, through one of the ever-recurring cycles of time, first to oligarchy, then to monarchy. The American republic, with its admirable forms of democratic liberty, may remain fifty years, or five hundred years; but after having completed its growth, it will follow, either as a whole, or in broken fragments, the universal law of decay. The vital spirit flows from form to form, in nations as well as in individuals, in men as well as in nature.

In fact, the seeds of aristocracy are in the Constitution, which concedes property representation to a section of the Confederation. Such a concession was, doubtless, an exigency of circumstances, but its nature is not thereby changed. The possessors of such a peculiar political privilege are united by interest of class, and bring to bear upon the executive, the judiciary, and the legislature a most dangerous power. Sad experience has taught how a chief magistrate, who is the head of a dominant party, rather than the independent president of the nation, may become the instrument of a half-formed oligarchy. The justice of history, however, is exact. If our population will give itself up to money-making, and neglect political duties, any kind of misrule that may consequently come will be fully deserved. As Plato long ago said, the legitimate punishment for not choosing good rulers is to be governed by bad rulers.

Thus we have passed in review the political history of the

whole civilized world. The primary law which Aristotle observed in the development of the Grecian states, which Machiavelli perceived in mediæval European history, we find holds good of every nation. The oldest political form is, everywhere, monarchy. Hegel greatly errs in calling the earliest governments despotic. A despot rules a people, who *understand* their rights, *against their will*, for his own benefit; he thinks of his own liberty and his own interest, not of the interest and liberty of his subjects; he maintains his power by a body-guard, like the Grecian tyrant, or by a standing army, like the modern emperor. Now, during the first years of their existence, nations are, *κατ' ἐξοχήν*, in a state of political childhood; that is, the masses composing them are entirely unconscious of human rights, as such, and consequently make no struggle for a liberty of whose existence they are wholly ignorant. He who rules them may be unjust, inhuman, and barbarous, but he cannot be called a despot. He is a monarch, in the strictest sense of the word, for he rules alone, and encounters no opposition to his power. Such, as we have seen, were the first rulers of Greece, of Rome, and of all modern European states.

The second political phase of nations is oligarchy. The monarch cannot live alone; he has need of his fellow-mortals, socially and politically. Those who approach his person become, to a certain extent, participators in his liberty and power; they find liberty sweet and power seductive, and, easily uniting their strength for a common purpose, they gradually strip the monarch of his privileges, and at length rule alone. Thus the knights in Greece, the patricians at Rome, the great feudal lords of modern Europe, were, during a considerable period, masters of the state.

In the contest between the monarch and the nobles, between the one and the few, the people, the many, are taught in various ways their natural political rights. The multitude then appears as a *demos*, as a *plebs*, as a *tiers état*, as a commonalty, constituting a new power in the nation. Having once become conscious of rights, the multitude is not satisfied until those rights are realized. Sometimes the third power, that of the people, contends with the second, that of the aristocracy, with-

out the intervention of the first power, that of the monarchy. When this is the case, then there is a gradual transition from oligarchy to democracy, without the interposition of despotism, as at Rome and in Switzerland. Sometimes the monarch, left upon his almost powerless throne, as in Europe during the Middle Age, or appearing as a popular leader, like Peisistratus and others in Greece, unites with the people against the nobles, and, when the common enemy is destroyed, ignores his allies, and rules alone. Then the transition from oligarchy to democracy is marked by a period of despotism, as in Greece during the rule of the tyrants, as in Europe during the sway of absolutism. In our times, democracy has been reached in the United States, in Switzerland, and, with some important drawbacks, in England; and, if human history be not a fortuitous concourse of political atoms, democracy will soon become the possession of the down-trodden Continental nations.

Of course we do not use the terms monarchy, oligarchy, and democracy, as we should use them in a strictly metaphysical discussion, in an absolute sense. In fact, pure democracy, pure aristocracy, or pure monarchy exists only in the human mind. In actual history, we designate a certain form of government by one or another of these terms, according to its predominant characteristic. The three elements always co-exist; but the regular changes from the controlling ascendancy of one to that of another constitute the primary momentum of political history.

As we said in the beginning, our law holds good, not only of a single nation, but also of groups of nations, that fill up an epoch. We may infer, too, from the analogy of nations and eras, and from the data furnished by the arc of universal history that sweeps through a few thousand years of the whole circle of time, that the development of the race follows the same order. An element of human progress is thus admitted. It would be absurd to pretend that mankind will advance without limits of time and degree. The whole analogy of nature, to say nothing of the positive declarations of Scripture, is against such a belief. When the race arrives at maturity, it will doubtless follow the universal doom of decay.

The world, like a nation, must begin in patriarchal monarchy, pass through oligarchy to democracy, and then return to the place of starting. The race, however, is not yet ripe, and the vision of progress has for us something more than a shadowy meaning. The nature of civilization is not changed; but from century to century, from epoch to epoch, civilization reaches a greater number. In this way only is progress made. It is an indication of the poor quality of our thinking, that men almost universally mistake the instruments of civilization for civilization itself. Plato and St. Augustine were doubtless as thoroughly civilized as any two men that could be found in this luminous nineteenth century of ours, although they knew nothing about railroads, joint-stock banks, steamboats, printing-presses, or Protestant reformations. Astronomy, botany, chemistry, and many other things, were unknown to the Athenians, yet Pericles and his fellow-citizens were not quite destitute of civilization. Perfect mental, moral, and physical development constitutes perfect manhood. The instruments which we now possess for such development are more numerous and better than those possessed by the ancients. Always supposing, then, that we make as wise and energetic use of ours as the ancients did of theirs, we must be in advance of them. But the progress of modern times does not so much consist in this, as in the wider distribution of instruments. By means of printing, books are now distributed to the masses, so that the poor man, for a small part of a single day's wages, can summon to his fireside the blessed Redeemer and the glorious company of the Apostles, in the mysterious drapery of words. Every forty years a whole generation of men, forming a complete link in the chain of history, must be carried through the whole process of partial civilization; but the civilization is becoming more complete, more widely extended, because its instruments are constantly improved, multiplied, and cheapened. Thus, we see, the spirit of national progress has a democratic tendency; for with the extension of culture and knowledge come the desire and the ability to rule.

Now a nation can arrive at freedom only when a majority of the people composing it have attained a considerable degree

of mental and moral energy. A nation can maintain its freedom only so long as it is in a mental and moral condition to deserve freedom. It is an inexorable law of Providence, that every man becomes in the hands of God the instrument of the rewards and punishments with which he is visited. It is just the same with a people. Nations, except sometimes for a short period, are governed as they deserve. History, then, is not to be arraigned at the bar of abstractions, is not to be judged by the ideal standards of the mind, but accepted as a drama of commingled human passions, wherein, from scene to scene, from act to act, appear the decisions of Eternal Justice in regard to the *moral* quality of man's deeds. The highest philosophy, as well as the experience of history, shows us that the only solid basis of government is the eternally true and good. The various theories of government, founded upon the false ethical principles that sprang up with the depraved philosophy which wrecked the French Revolution, have given place to sounder political doctrines, so that, with the next great democratic triumph in Europe, legislators as well as people will be duly prepared, we hope, to gather and preserve the fruits of victory.

It is encouraging to know that prosperity has always come to nations with liberty. Prosperity, as well as liberty, is of several kinds. Now liberty, of whatever kind, brings prosperity of the same kind. Thus at Athens, in the time of Pericles; at Rome, during the reign of Augustus, and again when Leo X. filled the papal chair; in France, under Louis XIV.; in England, during the reign of Elizabeth, — there was mental freedom, and consequently great literary prosperity. Commerce has always flourished wherever it has been free. When any field of human activity is open to all comers, it is for that very reason more fully occupied and more thoroughly cultivated.

Omitting many pregnant questions, both of principle and of form, which here present themselves, we will close this long discussion by quoting a few *semina æternitatis*, a few "zopyra," — to use a term of the elder Scaliger, — from Aristotle's Politics, which we commend to many a man now in high office, who, like the

“ Celestial sausage-seller,
Friend, guardian, protector of us all,”

in Aristophanes, imagines himself to be a statesman, although wholly ignorant of philosophy and history.

“He who bids the law to be supreme, makes God supreme; but he who intrusts man with supreme power, gives it to a wild beast, for such his appetites sometimes make him. Passion, too, influences those who are in power, even the very best of men, for which reason the law is intellect free from appetite.”— *Politics*, Book III. chap. 16.

“One individual, whoever he may be, will be found upon comparison inferior to a whole people taken collectively. . . . The multitude are also less liable to corruption; as water is from its quantity, so are the many less liable to corruption than the few.”— *Id.*, Book III. chap. 15.

“The political state is founded, not for the purpose of men’s merely living together, but for their living as men ought.”— *Id.*, Book III. chap. 9.

“A good citizen must know how to be able to command and to obey; he ought also to know in what manner freemen ought to govern and to be governed.”— *Id.*, Book III. chap. 4.

“It is evident that all those governments which have the common good in view, are rightly established and strictly just; but that those which have in view only the good of the rulers, are all founded on wrong principles, and are widely different from what a government ought to be; for they are tyrannical, whereas a state is a community of freemen.”— *Id.*, Book III. chap. 6.

“The laws of every state will necessarily be like the state itself, either trifling or excellent, just or unjust.”— *Id.*, Book III. chap. 11.

“It is not enough to lay down scientifically what is best, but what can be put in practice.”— *Id.*, Book IV. chap. 1.

“It is not well to say that one oligarchy is better than another, but that it is not quite so bad.”— *Id.*, Book IV. chap. 2.

“It follows, that citizens who engage in public affairs should be men of abilities therein.”— *Id.*, Book IV. chap. 4.

“There are three qualifications necessary for those who intend to fill the first departments in government; first of all, an affection for the established constitution; in the second place, abilities wholly equal to the business of their office; in the third, virtue and justice correspondent to the nature of that particular state in which they are placed.”— *Id.* Book V. chap. 8.